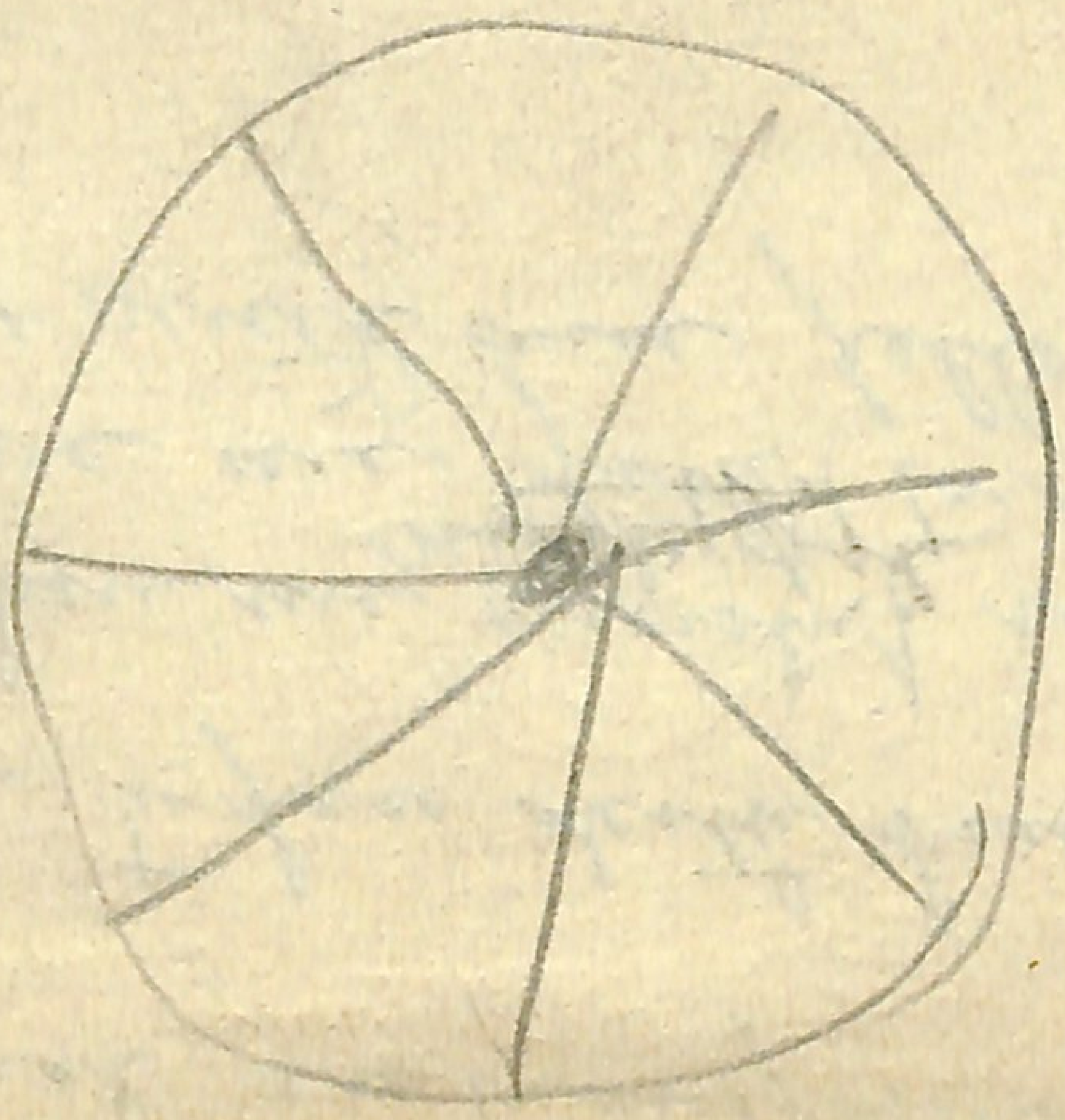

Worship

Mar. 14, 1937

Worship.

Text.—

Intro. The place of worship in the service of the church.

Central to the thot of worship — the honoring of God.

the recognition of God's worth —

reverence, ~~fel~~ praise, adoration.

I. What we mean by Worship.

The expression of the feelings which result from intercourse with God.

When we interview great personalities our emotions are stirred & we seek to give them expression.

When one has an interview with God — he is deeply stirred & naturally expresses himself accordingly.

Any sense of contact with the infinite stirs our hearts & arouses expression.

Worship cannot exist without this contact and intercourse with the Infinite.

3 essentials to Worship.

Intercourse with God

The resultant feeling

The expression of that feeling.

3) II Our intercourse with God like our intercourse with men.

1. We communicate with men thru physical expression

Men speak, write, make gestures, paint pictures, sculpture forms, sing, conduct business, work and play - by means of which they express themselves.

Man is more than physical but he expresses himself thru the physical.

2. Likewise God is more than the physical universe, but he expresses himself thru the physical, including man.

Suppose I could place myself outside of the universe & survey the whole creation as I now can survey you - what would I see?

I should see a single living organism with every part including man related to every other part in orderly fashion as in a physical organism. I should see it all in motion, alive, changing, doing things giving expression to intelligence, truth, beauty and goodness. I should feel myself in the living presence of a self-conscious personality who was addressing me by word & gesture.

The earth & the heavens - the power & dependability of God - his moral character.

A stone - made up of atoms in which are whirling systems of protons & electrons - an expression of God's life.

The grass & flowers - birds singing

3/ Sunrise & sunset

I look upon man & his works — part of God at work. I find in man intelligence thinking; feelings (from deep sorrow to sublime joy) I find will — the power to direct & execute

Whittier's experience as a boy — his mother's care of a cast out sick girl. "I wonder if God is as good as my mother is?"

In the body & spirit of Jesus we [see] God expressing himself

III. What about the evil in the world?

I make no pretense at solving the problem of evil. I simply note that in the midst of life — death is present.

My body is constantly dying — sloughing off the old dead waste material — the unlovely part of life.

The great thing, however, is the victory of life over death. In the very process of the change we call death life is made possible. That life is God in action before our eyes.

IV. Our contacts with God — in nature, in our own hearts, in the personalities of great souls — in Christ — awakens within us great emotions which express themselves in worship. If you come to church having had communion with God, the

4 service of worship – whether elaborately ritualistic or very simple – will mean a great deal to you.

The sordid & the ignoble are impossible in such an atmosphere. However exacting our work – in worship we are made strong & fitted for the task. Our sense of God as our Heavenly Father makes all mankind brothers to us, & we are prompted to deal nobly & justly & kindly with one & all.

We rise from the levels of low living to the higher appreciations & duties of life.

Our burdens & sorrows, in the light of the Eternal, are transformed into hope and joy.

We learn to face death bravely.

In short, when we worship in spirit & in truth we are ~~fitted~~ made fit to live ~~in~~ with God & with our fellow men.